To Dear Shreve D.G.L.
With Kind Regards D. H.J. Thomas Esq
1922

SERMON,

PREACHED

At St. Paul's Church, in Halifax,

BEFORE

THE PROVINCIAL GRAND LODGE

OF

Free and Accepted ANCIENT MASONS,

JUNE 24*th*, 1803.

On the celebration of St. John the Baptist,

BY

THE REVEREND THOMAS SHREVE, A. M.

RECTOR OF St. GEORGE'S, PARRSBORO',

AND

P. G. C. for the Province of Nova-Scotia.

Halifax:

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HALIFAX, JUNE 24, 1803.

IN GRAND LODGE---RESOLVED---*That the Thanks of this R. W. Grand Lodge be given to our Reverend Brother* SHREVE, *for his excellent and inſtructive Sermon delivered this day before the R. W. Grand Lodge, and the Worſhipful Lodges of* FREE AND ACCEPTED ANCIENT MASONS, *held in this Town; and that he be requeſted to give a Copy of the ſame for the Preſs---and the Grand Secretary is hereby ordered to wait on Brother* SHREVE, *with a Copy of the above-mentioned Reſolve.*

Extract from the Minutes,

JOHN SELBY, *Grand Secretary.*

TO THE R. W. GRAND LODGE,

AND THE

WORSHIPFUL LODGES

OF

Free and Accepted Ancient Masons,

HELD IN THE TOWN OF HALIFAX,

THE FOLLOWING SERMON, IN OBEDIENCE TO THE ABOVE REQUEST,

Is most humbly inscribed by their

AFFECTIONATE BROTHER,

and

MOST HUMBLE SERVANT,

THOMAS SHREVE.

A

SERMON, &c.

First Epiſtle of St. PETER—2d Chap. and part of the 17th verſe.

"*Love the Brotherhood;—Fear God;—Honor the King.*"

PLEASANT as the work of the miniſtry has been, and always is, in all its offices;—delightful as the aſſemblies of our fraternal meetings, in the Maſonic Order have been, and always ought to be, when aſſembled as upon the preſent occaſion—yet we muſt confeſs, that it is with much diffidence we come forward in the line of our duty, to addreſs an audience ſo reſpectful as the preſent, on a ſubject which they in general are not ſo well enlightened, as rightly to underſtand.

Various are the excitements that prompt to an attendance on the preſent aſſemblies.

On the one hand, we behold the Brotherhood, who, profeſſing our Royal Order, come, I truſt, with a pious wiſh, to hear the humane and moral principles of their profeſſion explained and enforced.—On the other, ſome of our Chriſtian Brethren, from the liberal ſpirit of charity, think-

ing no evil of ſo ancient and venerable an inſtitution, are piouſly diſpoſed to join in our worſhip of the Almighty Architect, and Father of us all.—While others, who, perhaps, becauſe they are not ſo well acquainted with the ſecret of our Order, may be a little prepared for *evil ſurmiſe, ridicule* or *ſlander*—or, having heard of the ſecret of Maſonry, with the curious and inquiſitive hope, that ſomething may, at ſuch a time, be advanced, leading to a diſcovery.

It is from hence a diffidence naturally ariſes, leſt we ſhould be wanting in our addreſſes to ſuch different claſſes of hearers.

But on a ſubject of ſo high importance, ſo univerſal concern as is contained in the words of my text, there is no one preſent, I preſume, thinks himſelf unconcerned in the injunction laid upon us by the Apoſtle; nor doubt, when I affirm, that this ſociety, as a peculiar family or people, the *love of the Brotherhood*;—as candidates for eternity, *the fear of God*;—and as citizens of an earthly kingdom and nation, *the honour of the King*—are *three of our brighteſt jewels—three of our richeſt ornaments—three of our firſt and moſt univerſally prevailing principles.*

That they were not all Iſraelities, who called themſelves of Iſrael, was an apoſtolical reproof to ſome wicked Jews;—that they are not all Chriſtians who bear the name of Chriſt, is, I believe,

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what all will confeſs—a daily cauſe for Chriſtian lamentation. Is it to be wondered then, or is it any true ſtigma upon Maſonry, that you may ſometimes have known ſome Maſons, who, like Jews and Chriſtians, abuſing a good profeſſion, neither *love the Brotherhood*, fear God, nor honour the King.

Methinks there cannot be a mind in this congregation ſo illiberal, who, on reflection, is not ready to confeſs, that the ill-conduct of one, often, or of an hundred individuals, can be no true cauſe of ſtigma upon any profeſſion or community—For inſtance, ſhall the church be ſtiled a brothel, or a nurſery of covetouſneſs and idleneſs, becauſe many of its members, and even ſome clergymen, are ſometimes to be found, who are looſe in their morals, unholy in their lives, unclerical, covetous and laſcivious? Surely not, ſurely candour, and mature reflection, will demand a far different judgment.

Shall Maſonry then be condemned, deſpiſed and ridiculed, becauſe ſome, profeſſing themſelves Maſons, have practiſed a conduct unworthy their high calling and profeſſion?—Surely no! rather let the order remain, as it ought to remain, unimpeached; and every defective member, either high or low, either rich or poor, as of every other profeſſion, order and community, take much ſhame to himſelf, as being guilty of a threefold evil—of diſgracing himſelf, bringing diſhonour upon

upon the profeſſion or community of which he is ſo unworthy a member, and of hindering its profitable progreſs in the world.

Senſible of the high importance of the duties enjoined in the text, to all Chriſtians, and ſo congenial to the ſpirit and practice of our excellent order, I have thought it a ſuitable ſubject to engage our preſent meditations; and, though I lament the ſhortneſs of notice, to the call of this my duty, I ſhall endeavour, though briefly, yet plainly, to ſet before you ſome of the fatal conſequences of a defect in the due diſcharge of the duties enjoined upon us in the text; and then enforce our general, as well as particular, obligations thereunto;—and

1ſt. The deepeſt, and moſt to be lamented ſource of human miſery, is, that in the fall of Adam we loſt our likeneſs to the Deity, in that firſt and moſt prevailing characteriſtic of His Divine nature and eſſence, *love*;—the loſs of this which produced, or at leaſt made way for *envy*, *malice*, *revenge*, and all thoſe evil tempers and diſpoſitions, which now ſo univerſally prevail in the human heart, *ſtamped*, in early day, that black and deteſtable character of murderer upon Cain, and ſent him forth an accurſed and deteſtable vagabond upon the earth.—It is the loſs of this characteriſtic of the Divine Nature, in its prevailing efficacy, which, in all ages of the world, hath unſheathed the bloody ſword of the

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ambitious or *cruel* warrior, and raiſes nation againſt nation, in all the horrors of ſtrife, of envy, of contention and of bloodſhed.—It is the loſs of this, the divineſt trait of divine perfection, which, in all ages hath filled the church with controverſies and perſecutions; and ſtained it with its cruel crimes of martyrdom and baniſhment.—It is the loſs of this eſſence of the Divinity which breaketh the family compact, and findeth to the man enemies in his own houſe.

In ſhort, it is the loſs of this characteriſtic of the Divine Nature, (i. e.) *love*, from the human heart, which embitters where they are embittered, every connection of human life;—makes every boſom at times loath its own ſenſations; and totally unfits us for the enjoyment of the beatific viſion of God; and the more or leſs we want and neglect the cultivation of this eſſence of the Divine perfections, ſo the more or leſs ſhall we ever be like Cain of old, fruitleſs wanderers after happineſs over the earth, and in the ſight of God, deteſted vagabonds in the world.

Son of the morning, how art thou fallen! created in the image of God, ornamented according to thy decree, with all the amicableneſs of that Divine perfection, *love*; by which alone that Great Supreme manifeſts to, and glorifies all his perfections towards, all his inferior creation—but now alas! thro' the fall of man in paradiſe, deprived of this lovely nature; and by this depriva-

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tion not only deſpoiled of *goodneſs*, *innocence* and *felicity*, but expoſed (unleſs reſtored by means of the Divine exertion) to all the evil of ſin, the malignity of Satan, and the darkneſs of miſery and death;—but oh! with angels let human hearts rejoice.—The God of love, unchanged, tho' we have fallen, ſeeks his favoured, tho' fallen creature—and oh! ſtupendous, wondrous love!—for the cure of this defection in the heart of man, it ſeems, ever ſince it took place, to have been the grand aim of the Divine Agency, in all his tranſactions with the human race.

Sometimes like a fond indulgent father—he makes a feaſt, as with the fatted calf, prepares for the returning prodigal; though he ſees him but at a diſtance, the robe and ring—Sometimes he iſſues forth his mandates, as the avenging judge; and with a ſeeming angry tone, calls the unjuſt ſteward to give an account of his ſtewardſhip; and, with all the appearance of incenſed wrath, threatens impriſonment till the very laſt farthing of the accumulated debt is paid, (i. e.) till puniſhment effects what love could not effect, and the rebel ſubmits to the terms of ranſom.—Sometimes, again, and that very frequently, he gently rebukes the cruel, kindly reproves the covetous, and with authority and long ſufferings he exhorts the uncharitable; and tells what he himſelf is, and conſequently what we muſt be before we can be like him, or happy in ourſelves.—God is love; and he who dwelleth in love, (i. e.) in the love

love of God and his fellow-creature, dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Here then my brethren we have the very native breath of heaven, breaking through the lips of a diſciple of love, and foſtering over every heart, to promiſe that ſame lovely likeneſs which is the eſſence of the Divine, and which conſequently muſt conſtitute the eſſence of the human nature, before the latter can truly unite with the former, or enjoy its own in[illegible]ded native felicity.

How much to be eſteemed then, is every aid to promote ſo deſirable an end.

And here—to you my Maſonic Brethren, I may, in a particular manner ſay, as Moſes ſaid to the Iſraelites in Egypt—*Sirs, ye are my Brethren*—Brethren in the moſt extenſive ſenſe of the word—All men, it is true, we may ſay, are brethren by creation; as He who made the world, of one blood made He all the nations of the earth.

All men are brethren alſo by redemption—He who is the author of nature, and the great reſtorer of fallen nature, *taſted death for every man*—ſo far all are brethren;—but ye have ſtill farther obligations, not only to love as brethren, but to love the brotherhood.—Obligations voluntarily entered into, when your minds were at full maturity

maturity to conſider; when they had full liberty to have refuſed;—indeed, ye may be ſaid, with full maturity of underſtanding, to have given yourſelves wholly to the brethren, and that with the moſt ſerious aſſeverations of conſtancy and fraternal affection.—If, therefore, you are convicted of failing in the performance of ſo ſacred and ſo deliberately engaged obligations, where, or in what inſtance, I beſeech you, ſhall we poſſibly hope to find you faithful in the performance of any promiſe.

Remember then, that brotherly love conſiſts, not only in improving, rebuking and exhorting—but alſo in tender commiſſeration and relief, in ſorrow and diſtreſs.—Here the *eye*, the *ear*, the heart, the hand, are all employed—the eye ſees the wound and drops the piteous tear—the *ear* hears the melancholy ſighs of grief, and the boſom heaves with the reciprocal ſighs of love—the heart participates the ſilent groan, and melts into ſoft compaſſion—from the abundance of the heart the hand is guided to act, as well as the mouth is taught to ſpeak;—and, while the ſoft word of commiſſerating pity, ſoothes the deſpairing ſoul of the afflicted, the benevolent hand of compaſſionate relief, is liberally ſtretched out to relieve the ſorrows of penury and diſtreſs.

My friends, and brethren, ſuffer the word of exhortation, prove yourſelves men, by the exerciſe of humanity—prove yourſelves Chriſtians,

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in this bright imitation of your compaſſionate *Maſter*—Yea, prove yourſelves Maſons in the beſt ſenſe of Maſonry, by the conſtant exerciſe of this exalted principle of humanity—this ſpiritual trait of Chriſtianity—this highly finiſhed *Jewel* of Maſonry—*Brotherly love.*

And, as we love the Brotherhood, ſo alſo let us *fear God.*

It is indeed much to be lamented, as has been before obſerved, that all who profeſs Maſonry, are not religious—no more than all who hear the name of Chriſt, and the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, are not Chriſtians.

But to you who are truly enlightened with a juſt ſenſe of our Royal Order, muſt be ſenſible, that Maſonry itſelf, in all its ſentiments, ceremonies, and profeſſions, bears every characteriſtic of Him, who built the univerſe—lighted, warmed, and ornamented this world, with all thoſe orbs of light and heat which beautify the canopy of heaven; and who, without labour, perfected the whole.—By the ſcience of Maſonry, are you guided to ſtudy the order, beauty, regularity, and uſefulneſs, of all the mighty works in nature; and by its precepts and admonitions, are you to form nature to nature's God—It leads you from the beautiful building of the univerſe up to its Almighty Architect; and binds you in the moſt ſacred obligations, to fear Him, who can build, and

who can deſtroy—who can raiſe and who can pull down; yet, not to fear with that ſlaviſh fear, as if he delighted to deſtroy; but to fear with that filial awe and reverence which becometh thoſe who fear *Him*, who hath built on purpoſe to endure; and who, though on account of the deſtruction, with which Satan hath injured His works, muſt change them; yet will again make all things new, and beſtow an everlaſting crown of glory on thoſe, who, though in much filial *fear* and *trembling*, have faithfully worked their ſalvation.

Fear Him then, my brethren, with a filial fear—better expreſſed by that better word, *love*; who, though the building hath been injured by the defection of ſin, will reſtore and ornament it, (if we are not wanting to ourſelves) with all its original order, regularity, beauty, excellency, and uſefulneſs;—who will again adorn it with all its former beauty—who will cleanſe all its defiled veſſels—who will make it a beautiful temple for his own everlaſting reſidence—who will manifeſt himſelf in all his glory to all its inhabitants—and who will write upon its doors and door poſts, upon its windows, upon its porches and pillars, *Holineſs to the Lord*, felicity to all its inhabitants, and no admiſſion—no, no admiſſion to pain or ſorrow, or miſery or death.—My brethren, let me beſeech you then, fear God, that great Architect who builds, and no one can wholly deſtroy, who can puniſh the rebellious and diſobedient,

dient, as well as reward the faithful and diligent ſervant.

But we haſtily paſs on to our third admonition—*Honor the King.*

I am very ſenſible that it is the opinion of many, that a political ſubject is by no means a proper ſubject for pulpit diſquiſition—and eſpecially is this obſervation made by thoſe, with whom our ſentiments, on ſuch ſubjects, may happen to differ or claſh.

The force of the obſervation, I am ready, at certain times, and in particular circumſtances, fully to admit; but in the preſent day, when the blaſt of War is again ſounded in our ears, when the ſword of vindictive juſtice is again commanded by the beſt of Sovereigns, to be unſheathed in defence of all that is dear to us—when the conſuming flames of a political furor have had that deſtructive tendency to pull down or univerſally pollute the temples of God, and all their holy things—to kill, baniſh or expoſe, to the miſerable neceſſity of living upon the charity of our nation, thoſe who waited at the altar.—In the preſent day, when it is a proof of patriotiſm, to blaſpheme God and His Religion, and ſubſtitute for adoration, a licentious liberty, and the decrees of tyrants—when it is thought conſiſtent with the rights of man, to deny the exiſtence of God, and the ſovreignity of all His attributes;—

and to ſubſtitute in the ſtead, a ridiculous equality, totally inconſiſtent with the preſent imperfect ſtate of man:—when it is the united effects of religion and patriotiſm, falſely ſo called, to lay aſide all the ideas of ſubordination, upon which the happineſs of man, both in a civil and religious ſenſe ſo much depend—and to ſubſtitute rapine, plunder and murder.—I ſay, when a political furor has already produced, and again ſeeks to produce ſuch horrid effects—ſurely then, politics become even a neceſſary part of our religion; and, in ſuch a defection from every thing which is conſiſtent with true religion and patriotiſm, were we, whom God has appointed the guides of your religious exerciſes, wholly to hold our peace; we might expect that the ſtones would cry out againſt either our inſenſibility or our diſaffection.

Call to your remembrance, my beloved Brethren, the unhappy ſtate of the Brotherhood in that wretched country, the origin of all this evil. —No where could a body of Maſons meet in the manner we are this day met—firſt to pay, without fear or diſtraction, our humble and devout addreſſes to our Right, our everlaſting Right Worſhipful Maſter in Heaven; and then, in peaceful ſocial converſe, take our refreſhment.—Far be it from me to ſuppoſe that you, or any of my reſpectful hearers, would deem it an impertinent intruſion, in this devout exerciſe, to add to brotherly love and the fear of God, the neceſſary admonition we are now enforcing, *Honor the King*

King—of you, I hope better things! things wiſe for yourſelves, wiſe for your families, wiſe for your friends, wiſe for all your fellow-citizens.—You, my beloved brethren, to whom I am more immediately addreſſing myſelf, you will all, me-thinks, gladly ſuffer the exhortation.—Honor him, who with all his power, ſo fully preſerves to us, the enjoyment of the preſent privilege, with ten thouſand more, which time permits us not to mention.—Honor him, who, in union with the Lords and Commons of the nation, forms ſuch a conſtitution, as with all its excellencies, is not to be found in all the world beſides.—Honor him, who, as a huſband, father, friend, is a ſhining pattern for the beſt of imitations.—Honor him with your words, and ſpeak well of his name.—Honor him with your perſons, which, ſhould his government be ſubverted, would be in immediate danger.—Honor him with your fortunes, if, in the preſent critical moment, it ſhould be deemed neceſſary for his own and your defence.—This advice, my brethren, I offer to you all who hear my voice; but, with reſpect to you, my Maſonic Brethren, I ſcruple not to ſay, and woe is me, if, as a miniſter of the High God, and of that Church of which the King is the *temporal* head. Woe is me, I ſay, if I am not faithful to my truſt and to my commiſſion; if you obey not this admonition in conjunction with the other two, with zeal, ſteadineſs and perſeverance, you, if I am not totally miſtaken, act repugnant to all the order of your community; you forfeit, if I at all underſtand

derſtand them, your moſt ſacred obligations; you run, if I know any thing of the matter, you run contrary to the ſpirit and tenor of all your lectures. —In ſhort, if we obey not this admonition, we forfeit our characters, both as good men and Maſons.

Let me therefore again impreſs it on your minds, as I muſt be faithful to God, to my conſcience and to my King, that you would ſo order your lives as to approve yourſelves good Maſons, good Men, and good Citizens, by conſcientiouſly loving the Brotherhood, fearing God, and honoring the King.—And, at the preſent important criſis, whether in our families, in our neighbourhood, in the Church, in our Lodge, or even in the chearful, ſocial, feſtive hour, let it be the wiſh of the heart, that *God would ſave the King*, and by him preſerve to us all our Civil, Religious, and Maſonic privileges, to which, I truſt, with one heart and one voice, we ſhall all ſay, Amen, and Amen.

(Here all the Maſons with a loud voice, to repeat Amen and Amen.)

TO CONCLUDE,

The ſocial principle is one of the moſt valuable bleſſings beſtowed upon us by the God of nature —but, as the beſt things, when corrupted, often become the worſt, ſo this, when ill-managed, and indiſcreetly applied, is a ſource of the bitterest evils.

We

We love ſociety, and happy is it for us we do; for without this inſtinct, the welfare of the public, and of individuals could no more be ſecured, than the inanimate world could be kept together without the great principle of attraction.

As Brethren, then, in one of the firſt and moſt honorable communities in the world, let it be ſaid of you, with all truth, as it was once ſaid of the primitive Chriſtians, *See how theſe Maſons love.*—Let, therefore, all malice and envy, and evil ſpeaking, and wrath, and contentions, be, for ever, done away from amongſt you; and be ye kindly affectionate one towards another, with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another.—

As labourers and workmen under the great and grand Architect of the univerſe, let it be ſaid of you as of the good Nehemiah and his laborious companions, that they worked day and night to rebuild the walls of the holy city:—ſo work ye, my brethren, not only with ſcientific ſkill, but with never-ceaſing diligence; until the grand Temple of your ſpiritual and eternal Maſonry is fully raiſed to its topmoſt ſtone, with ſhouting of everlaſting adoration upon its completion—*for its walls ſhall be adoration, and its gates praiſe.*

Finally, let it be impreſſed on your minds, let it ſink deep into your very hearts, that to love the *Brotherhood*—to *fear God*—and *to honor the King*—are each and all of them ſuch eſſential chi[illegible]teriſtics,

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characteriſtics of the honorable profeſſion of Maſonry, that where both the ſentiment and practice of them do not univerſally prevail, whatever any man may call himſelf, I heſitate no more to pronounce that he is not a *good Maſon*—than I ſhould to ſay,---a thief, a murderer, a blaſphemer, is not a good Chriſtian.

As good ſubjects, then, my brethren, honor that King, who, by his ſceptre of political juſtice, righteouſneſs and love, guardeth all the privileges of our Royal Order; and, by the ſword of his national power, he defendeth us from our foreign and domeſtic foes; and, though not a Maſonic Brother, he gives us every proof that he is more valuable than many brethren.---*He is our protecting Friend.*

As Maſons, therefore, in gratitude for theſe diſtinguiſhed favors, render we back with warmeſt zeal, our due tribute of honor to the King, and all his illuſtrious family---for where, beſides here, can our honor be ſo juſtly due.

Now, to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, be aſcribed as is moſt juſtly due, all power, might, majeſty and dominion, now and for ever, Amen.

PRAYER.

PRAYER.

LET us pray for the King's moſt excellent Majeſty---the Queen, and for every branch of that invaluable Family; and, as we are in duty bound in a particular manner, pray we, for His Royal Highneſs the Prince of Wales, and every of his Royal Brothers, who have, or who intend to honor themſelves and us by their union with our honorable Society.---May this kingdom, gracious God, never want a Proteſtant Prince to wear its Crown, or to ſway its ſceptre; nor may our order, by any ſpecies of diſloyalty forfeit its preſent high reſpectabilily, of being a valuable and honorable Society, for Royal Union;---but may they and we, individually cheriſh all that reciprocal benefit of Maſonic Union, which ariſes from the true reciprocity of high and humble worth.

Bleſs, we beſeech thee alſo, as we are in duty bound to pray, our Right Worſhipful Grand Maſter, the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR *of this Province.---Pour down, we pray thee, O! thou King of Kings, thy univerſal blessing upon all eſtates and orders of mankind amongſt us.---Counſel our Counſellors, and teach our Senators wiſdom; and that we may never want wiſe and good men to bear rule, either in church or ſtate.---Let thy blessing reſt in a particular manner upon the Univerſities of Great-Britain and Ireland; as alſo upon the College of this Province, and all other ſchools of pious and uſeful education.---Bleſs us,*

us, as a nation, in all our national concerns.---Protect and assist us in all our endeavours, against the subtilty of domestic foes---and the cruel and implacable machinations of all our foreign enemies.---Succeed the tillage of our country, and give us to enjoy, in due season, the timely fruits of the earth, in all the usual plenitude of thine accustomed beneficence.---May the poor from the rich receive every necessary relief; and, though still poor, may they be contented with their portion, knowing that thou, in thine own wisdom, knowest what is best for all.

In a particular manner, at this time, would we supplicate thy Divine favor and blessing, upon this small portion of a large community, now worshipping before thy Glorious Throne---sanction with thy Divine grace, and heavenly benediction, all the pious endeavours, and all the benevolent intentions of this our sacred unity with each other;---make all and each of us, useful and ornamental members of this our very affectionate attachment. ---Give to us universally the true fear of thy holy name, that thy glory may ever rest upon us;---give us that true brotherly affection for each other that shall lead us to the true exercise of every Christian charity, every Masonic benevolence;---inspire us with every true Christian and British loyalty, that upon all occasions we may, if called upon, be found good *and* stedfast *subjects to our King and Constitution;---and above all, make us devout and zealous members of the Church of Christ,*

Chriſt, that having thus laboured in the Earthly Lodge of Maſonic piety, charity and integrity:---we may be tranſlated into that perfect Lodge of eternal felicity, whoſe builder and maker is the everlaſting Jehovah;---all which we humbly aſk and beg, in the name, and for the ſake, of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, Amen, and Amen.

FINIS.